

## The Pulp and Paper Industry

# Disposal of Logging Slash

Fire Hazard Enhanced by Accumulation of Slash — Experiments in Disposal of Slash — Burning Not Practicable in the East

By CLYDE LEAVITT.

For many years, it has been recognized that slash resulting from logging operations constitutes a most undesirable fire hazard. The great majority of destructive forest fires gain headway because of this accumulation of inflammable debris on cut-over lands. It has been fully recognized that if this accumulation could be disposed of safely, at a reasonable cost, the problem of forest fires would be well on its way to solution, to say nothing of greatly lessening the damage to standing timber by forest insects and parasitic fungi.

Slash disposal is now generally in effect in timber sales on unlicensed lands in the Dominion forest reserves. Operators find that, once their men become familiar with the work and recognize that it must be done, the cost is by no means prohibitive and competition with lumber cut under other conditions is quite possible. Of course, the stumpage revenues to the Government are somewhat smaller by virtue of this requirement, but forest officers regard this as a good investment. On Dominion Crown lands under license, however, this requirement is not effective, these lands not being under jurisdiction of the Forestry Branch. In consequence, the fire hazard to forest reserve lands is greatly increased.

In British Columbia very considerable progress has been made towards slash disposal in the Coast region, and a beginning has been made in the interior. This is largely the result of co-operation between the B. C. Forest Branch and the operators, though there is now legislation under which slash disposal may be made compulsory, the cost for the most part to be divided between the operator and the forest protection fund. On the Coast, broadcast burning is the rule, this involving comparatively little additional expense.

In the eastern provinces, however, broadcast burning is not feasible to any great extent, partly because of damage to the remaining undersized timber, and partly because in many cases the soil itself is highly inflammable. As a rule, under such conditions, slash must be piled for burning, and this necessarily involves material expense, in addition to the cost of burning, which has to be done under careful supervision.

In Ontario, slash disposal has been required in connection with two sales of timber, one to the Shevlin-Clark Lumber Company, in white and red pine, and the other to the Graves-Bigwood Lumber Company, on a tie operation in jack pine. While no specific figures of costs are yet obtainable, the indications are that, so far as these particular cases are concerned, the work is being handled at an additional cost which will be quite within the bounds of reason. Mr. L. E. Bliss, formerly Field Superintendent of Fire Protection with the Ontario Forest Branch, is in charge of the tie operation for the Graves-Bigwood Company, and is fully confident that the experiment in slash disposal in question will be a complete success, at an additional cost not at all prohibitive.

In Quebec and New Brunswick, a number of comparatively small experiments have been made, among the companies concerned being the Laurentide Company, Riordon Pulp and Paper Company, John Henderson Company, River Quelle Pulp and

Lumber Company and Bathurst Lumber Company. In the first of these the Commission of Conservation has co-operated with the Company, and in the last it has co-operated jointly with the Bathurst Lumber Company and the New Brunswick Forest Service, in both cases on experimental cuttings, to which further reference is made in the section on forest research.

While space prohibits a full discussion of costs in this report, it may be said that, for the most part, the results thus far are rather discouraging, as showing costs which are too high to be feasible for general adoption throughout logging operations, so long as present high costs of woods labour prevail. However, with wages reasonable normal, the cost would apparently not necessarily be prohibitive if the work were handled to the best advantage. The most favourable figures thus far reported are those for the Laurentide experiment, where costs averaged around \$1 per cord for pulpwood or roughly \$2 per M. for saw timber. Other costs are higher, in some cases, greatly so.

It must, however, be recognized that this work is still, in the east, in a purely experimental stage, that knowledge is still generally lacking as to the best methods of conducting such work, that woods labor is at present very expensive and sometimes far from efficient, and that, in some cases, such experiments have to contend with the natural conservatism of men accustomed through a lifetime to doing things in a peculiar way. In the conduct of such experiments, care has to be taken that such natural conservatism does not take the form of open or concealed hostility to the project, with consequent danger that costs will be made quite prohibitive. In any event, if success is to be expected, a good class of labour

(Continued on page 23.)

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